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Food Body

Isha Health & Wholeness Guides



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Isha Foundation



Food Body
(Isha Health & Wholeness Guides)
Isha Foundation
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First Edition: September 2013

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Published by: Isha Foundation
15, Govindasamy Naidu Layout,
Singanallur, Coimbatore - 641 005
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Your Body – A Heap of Food

“What you call as ‘my body’ is just an accumulation of the food you eat. So, what kind of food you eat should depend not on your values and ethics or on what you think about it, but on what the body wants. Food is about the body. If you are aware enough, if you just touch a piece of food, you will know how this food would behave in your system.

When it comes to food, ask the body what kind of food it is really happy with. Try different foods and see how your body feels after eating it. If your body feels very agile, energetic and nice, the body is happy. If the body feels lethargic and needs to be pumped up with caffeine or nicotine to stay awake, the body is not happy.

To eat intelligently means to understand and supply the kind of fuel the body is designed for so that it can function at its best. The way you eat not only decides your physical health it decides the very way you think, feel and experience life.

Above all, the food you eat is life. Other forms of life are giving up their life to sustain us. If you eat with enormous gratitude for all the living things which give up their life to sustain your life, food will behave in a very different way within you.”

– Sadhguru

Vegetarian or Non-vegetarian

- For different types of activities, you need a different kind of body.
- It is best that people eat according to the nature of their activity.
- For the kind of activities most people are involved in nowadays, vegetarian food is better for the system than non-vegetarian food.
- If you must eat non-vegetarian food, fish would be best. It is easily digestible with very high nutritional value.





Did You Know?

Meat is a rich source of protein. But it is important to note that only a few grams of protein are required in our daily diet, and excess protein consumption could cause cancer¹ and other health issues.² Sprouted gram, nuts, fruits and dry fruits are good sources of protein which can fulfill all your body's requirements. Consuming nuts also reduces the risk of heart disease.³



Protein-rich plant foods provide extra benefits not found in meat. Some plant foods include protective phytochemicals, such as isoflavones in soy. Beans contain protein combined with fiber, which levels our blood sugar.

How Much To Eat

Studies have found that the human brain works best when the stomach is empty. Researchers found that an empty stomach produces ghrelin, a hormone that carries the message to the brain that the stomach is hungry. The interesting thing is that this hormone performs other functions as well. Ghrelin stimulates and heightens the performance of the hippocampus, the region in the brain that handles learning, memory and spatial analysis,⁴ keeping us alert, active and focused. This of course, doesn't imply that we should never eat, but rather points to the fact that we need to be conscious of how much we eat.

Sadhguru elaborates on how we can get the best out of our day by optimizing our consumption of food.

"You shouldn't keep eating through the day. If you are below thirty years of age, three meals a day will fit well into your life. If you are over thirty, it is best to reduce it to two meals a day. Our body and brain work at their best only when the stomach is empty. Be conscious and eat in such a way that within two-and-a-half hours, the food moves out of the stomach bag, and within twelve to eighteen hours, it is completely out



Sadhguru serving delegates of the [Interfaith Deliberations](#) held at the [Isha Yoga Center](#) on June 23, 2013.

“The true joy of eating is to be conscious that another life is willing to merge and mingle with your own life and become a part of you.” – Sadhguru

of the system. If you maintain this simple awareness, you will experience much more energy, agility and alertness. These are the ingredients of a successful life irrespective of what you have chosen to do.”

– Sadhguru

Cooked or Raw Veggies?

- All the enzymes necessary for the digestive process are not present in the body. The food we eat is also supposed to contribute to digestion.
- The process of cooking destroys a significant portion of these enzymes in food.
- Eating food after this process of destruction does not give the same amount of life energy to the system. The body struggles to re-constitute these destroyed enzymes.



- Experiment and see, if you bring some raw vegetarian food into your diet, it keeps the body healthy and energetic. Start with 25% natural food and slowly push it up to 100% in four to five days. Stay there for a day or two and again cut it down in five days to 50% natural food and 50% cooked food. This is an ideal combination for most people who wish to be active sixteen to eighteen hours a day.
 - Natural food takes more time to eat than cooked food because it needs to be chewed more. So you need to consciously spend more time at the table to ensure you are eating sufficient food.
-



Keep in Mind

When eating raw food, be sure to soak them in a little bit of salt water and then swish them in cold water. This takes away any harmful organisms on the food.



Chew on This!

- Chewing your food properly plays an important role in digestion. Studies show that for starchy foods, 40% of digestion should happen with saliva.
- After a meal, give a break of at least two hours before going to bed. Digestion raises your metabolic activity. If you sleep in such a state, you will neither sleep well nor digest well! Depending on what you eat, as much as 80% of the food can go undigested if you sleep immediately after eating.
- Fruit should be eaten one-and-a-half to two hours before the meal. It is best to consume fruits during their season, and grown in your locality.
- Avoid drinking water during meals. Drink a little water a few minutes before the meal or thirty to forty minutes after the meal.



Did You Know?

Drinking too much water can cause swelling of the brain. It is always best to drink just a little more than what is needed to quench your thirst. Water can also be left standing overnight in a copper vessel. This destroys bacteria, and energizes the water powerfully. Copper surfaces tested in hospital Intensive Care Units (ICUs) have been found to kill 97% of the bacteria that are capable of causing hospital-acquired infections.⁵

Sadhguru elaborates on the Indian tradition of eating different foods in different seasons and how this practice helps the body cope with changing weather.

“In India and especially in South India, during summer, the food is cooked in one way, during the rainy season in another way and in winter another way, according to the vegetables available at that time and what is suitable for the body. It is good to bring in that wisdom and eat as per the needs of the body and according to weather or climate we live in.

For example, in winter, the skin usually breaks because the climate becomes cold and people don't traditionally use creams or lotions. There are certain foods like sesame and wheat which produce heat in the body. So when December comes, everyone eats sesame on a daily basis. It keeps the body warm and the skin clean. If there is lots of heat in the body your skin won't break. In summer, the body gets hot so cooling foods were eaten. For example, in Tamil Nadu, they eat kambu (pearl millet). These things were fixed so that the body is able to adjust itself for that season.”



– Sadhguru

Mix and Match

In India, food and the process of eating were an important aspect of the culture. What food and how to eat it was an integral part of every family's daily life.

"The body has a phenomenal sense of memory. A single molecule of DNA in your body carries much more memory than your whole brain does. Your DNA remembers the kind of nose your great-grandfather had and puts it on your face. There is a certain aspect of karma called runanu bandha. The body keeps a record of everything that has happened. Runanu bandha happens when there is a certain amount of meeting and mingling between people. Especially when intimacy happens with another body, the runanu bandha is much deeper.

Another thing is the type of food you eat. Whenever a little affluence comes, people think they have to eat everything in a single meal. If you go to any affluent dinners, it has become madness. Some time ago I was at an event where someone was very proudly announcing that they have 270 different varieties of food. People take a little of everything and eat. The body gets confused with this kind of food. Once your body gets confused you will go haywire in so many ways. In India, this understanding was always there. Orthodox people never ate more than two or three items in a meal, and those three items were always matched together. The intelligence of the stomach is such that putting various types of stuff in one thing doesn't gel with it."

— Sadhguru

Surprising Truths About Your Daily Food

Sugar

Sugar commonly refers to table sugar, chemically known as sucrose. The earliest known evidence of sugar production comes from India, around 500 BC. Historically, sugar was used in its unrefined, raw form taken directly from sugarcane. Sugarcane stems were beaten to extract cane juice, which was then clarified and boiled to a crystalline

solid. The solid was then broken into gravelly pieces and used. In fact, the word “sugar” is derived from the Sanskrit word *sharkara*, which literally means “gravelly.” Sugarcane was relatively unknown in the ancient West. One of the first Greeks to encounter sugarcane was Nearchos, a commander in Alexander’s army. During his travels along the Indus river, he described a reed which produced honey without bees!



Research shows that too much sugar consumption can lead to unhealthy eating patterns. Eating sugar creates an urge in many people to eat still more sugar, which can lead to binge-eating habits.

Today, much of the commercially available sugar is chemically refined and processed from its raw format. According to the United States National Institutes of Health, such refined sugar provides “empty calories” because the refining process removes almost all vitamins and minerals, drastically depleting the nutritional value of the sugar.⁶

The American Heart Association differentiates between intrinsic or naturally occurring sugar – which refers to sugar found naturally as an integral constituent of fruits, vegetables, and milk products – and extrinsic or added sugar – which refers to sucrose or other refined sugars added to soft drinks, food, and fruit drinks. Their report suggests that there may be evidence that high sugar consumption could worsen arteriosclerosis, and contribute to diabetes and nutritional deficiencies.⁷

Try this instead:

Jaggery

A good substitute for sugar is jaggery. Jaggery is the unrefined, raw form of sugar that was used by the ancients, and confused Nearchos when he saw it. Jaggery is widely used in India and South Asia as a sweetener. It retains the minerals, nutrients and vitamins present



in cane juice, and is used in Ayurveda – the ancient Indian medical system – to treat dry cough, improve digestion and for a host of other health issues.



Keep in Mind

Some products marketed as jaggery contain a chemical called super-phosphate which damages health. White, neat-looking jaggery is super-phosphate jaggery which should be avoided. The “ugly,” dark-looking jaggery is usually the proper jaggery.

Honey

Honey is also a wonderful substitute for sugar. Daily consumption of honey can do a lot, especially for people with excess mucus problems and asthma. It is also very good for the heart and brain, and keeps the mind alert.

Honey has been noted for its positive impact on health in several ancient medical texts. Modern research is also focusing on the medicinal properties of honey and is yielding several interesting results. When honey is mixed with tepid water

and consumed every day, it raises the red blood cell (RBC) count in the circulatory system. RBCs are the primary means of oxygen delivery to the various parts of the body. Consumption of honey also promotes increase in beneficial antioxidant agents, stimulates antibodies and combats harmful microbial activity.^{8,2}



Honey bees travel the equivalent of 195,000 kilometers or 5 roundtrips around the world to collect enough nectar for 1 kilogram of honey.





Students having their meals in one of nine Isha Vidhya rural schools.

“Your physical body is just the food you eat. With how much care, love and tenderness you handle the food, that’s how your body will be. As a child, my mother and grandmother never prepared food for the children without singing some hymn or chant about some god or goddess because they want the food to be enriched. And it makes such a difference. A child would never grow up feeling depressed, rejected or neglected.” – Sadhguru

Honey, when mixed with tepid water, also enhances the blood’s hemoglobin levels, which takes care of anemic conditions.¹⁰ Iron deficiency anemia is a condition that occurs when dietary intake or absorption of iron is insufficient, and the oxygen carrying capacity of the blood is compromised. The reduced oxygen carrying capacity leads to fatigue, breathlessness, and sometimes depression and other problems. Building the level of oxygen in the blood is extremely important because how healthy the body is and how easily it rejuvenates itself depends on the level of oxygen in the blood.





Keep in Mind

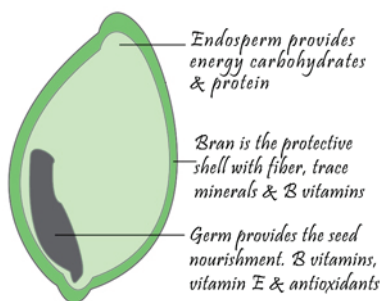
Honey if cooked, can turn poisonous. Mix honey with tepid or warm water, not in boiling hot water. Honey should also not be given to children under the age of one.

Milk

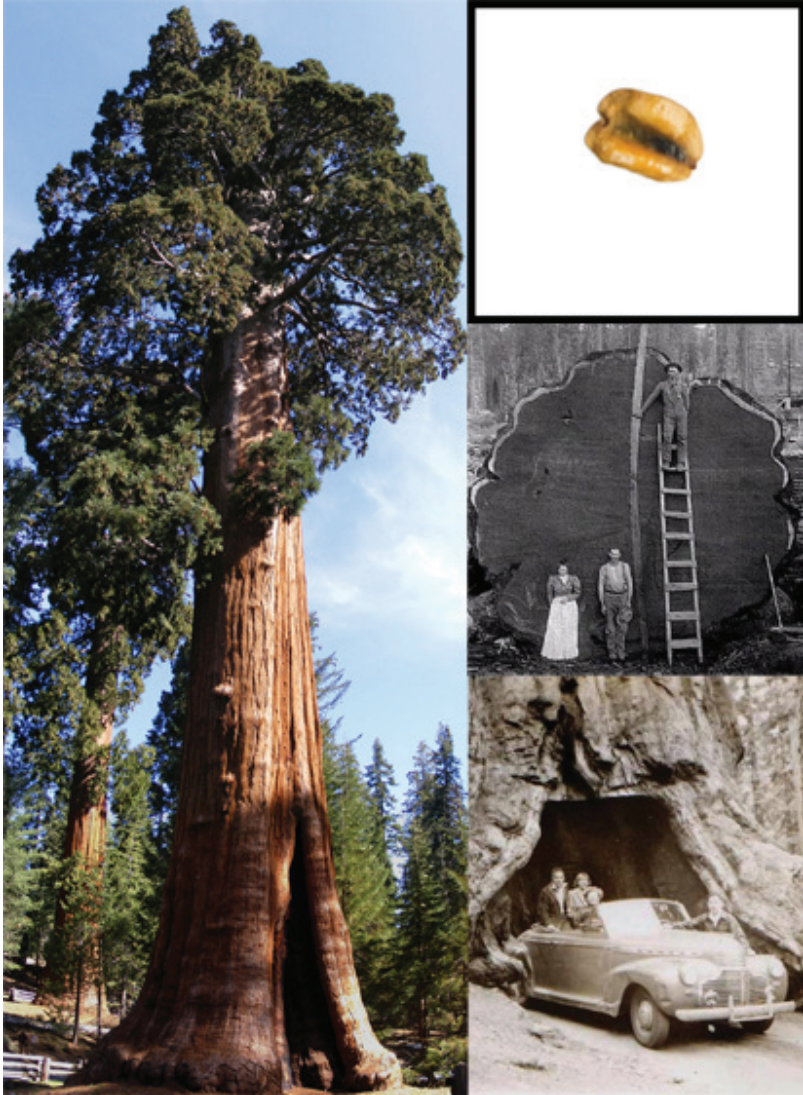
Only children below three years of age have the necessary enzymes to digest milk completely. Except in a few regions in the globe, milk is mostly indigestible for a majority of adults worldwide. The undigested milk is mucus-forming and causes lethargy. Milk is also traditionally believed to be a good source of calcium. But there are several other good sources of calcium, notably whole grains.

Grains

Grains are a rich source of energy and nutrition in their natural state, being a source of carbohydrates, proteins, oils and essential nutrients. Carbohydrates are the major source of energy and fuel for metabolism in the body. Grains also contain several of the essential nutrients required by the body. Some of these essential nutrients such as vitamins, dietary minerals, essential fatty acids, and essential amino acids are either not produced by the body or are produced in insufficient amounts.



*Seeds can be amazingly resilient. In 2012, scientists germinated a plant of the species *Silene stenophylla* from a seed buried by squirrels in the Siberian permafrost 30,000 years ago. Amazingly, the ancient plant matured and produced viable seeds of its own.*



The giant sequoias of North America are the largest living organisms on the planet. They can grow to 275 feet, weigh 2000 tons and live 3000 years. Amazingly, each tree begins its life inside a seed (top right) 5mm long and 1mm wide. The size and age of these plants made them prime targets for logging. The two images at bottom right give an idea of their immensity. During the nineteenth and early twentieth century, most of the oldest sequoias were felled to make furniture. Today, the species is endangered and is protected in several national parks.





The seed of the Coco de Mer palm is the largest seed of any plant. It can weigh upto 18 kgs. The plant's fruit is equally gigantic, the heaviest known, weighing 42 kgs. The palm is found only on two islands of the Seychelles.

A grain in its natural state is structurally composed of three components – endosperm, bran, and germ. The germ is the very core of the grain and contains the plant embryo. Around the germ lies the endosperm, the seed's food supply. The bran is the protective covering that surrounds the endosperm. The primary component of the endosperm is starch, which serves as the major energy supply for the germinating seed. The endosperm however, is relatively bare when it comes to vitamins, minerals, fiber and phytochemicals. The bran and germ in contrast, are



rich in a majority of these nutrients including B vitamins, amino acids, phytochemicals, and minerals such as calcium, magnesium, potassium, sodium and iron.

However, before grains are commercially sold, they are often refined after harvesting to improve texture and shelf-life. Known as refined grains, these grains go through a process where the bran and germ are separated and discarded, leaving only the starchy endosperm. The result is a grain from which most of the nutrients, minerals and dietary fiber have been lost.

A majority of the grains sold commercially today, go through some process of refining. Common examples include white rice and white flour. Whole grain products however, which retain the bran and germ, are becoming increasingly available. Examples include brown rice and whole wheat.

Whole grains are rich in many components that have been linked to reducing the risk of heart disease, cancer, obesity, type 2 diabetes and other chronic diseases. Most of these components are found in the germ and bran.¹¹



Keep in Mind

It is important to ensure that your diet includes more than just one or two cereals. A variety of highly nutritious, yet oft-neglected cereals are available, which can be important components of our diets.

“Today, doctors are saying that nearly 80 million Indians are heading to be diabetic. One of the reasons for this is most Indian people are on a single-cereal diet. People are eating either only rice or only wheat. This can definitely cause health problems. It is important to bring in a multigrain diet in one’s life.

In the last fifty years, they say eighty-seven varieties of pulses, grains, legumes and cereals have been lost for good in India. If you walked into a shop even thirty years ago in South India, there would be so many kinds of lentils. Today, it is either tuvar dhal, urad dhal or green gram dhal, that’s it. Even in Arab countries today – where half the land is desert – you find fifteen different types of cereals. India has only three or four left because we are wiping them out so effectively.

Traditionally, people always ate lots of grams, pulses, legumes and other things. But slowly those things have gone away, and if you look at a South Indian’s plate today, there will be so much rice and just a little bit of vegetable. This is a serious problem. This shift to a total carbohydrate diet that has happened in the last twenty-five or thirty years needs to be reversed because a person’s long-term health will be seriously affected if they just eat lots of carbohydrate and very little of other things. This is a basic conceptual change which needs to happen in people’s minds. The majority of the diet should not be rice but all the other things. Rice is your choice – whether you want to eat or not, you decide according to your hunger levels.”



– Sadhguru

Whole grains such as *ragi* (finger millet) and *bajra* (pearl millet) are rich sources of calcium. They can be made into *rotis* (unfermented breads), *dosas* (pancakes), cookies, porridge and even tasty *laddus* (ball-shaped sweet).

Finger millet

Finger millet (*Eleusine coracana*), also known as *ragi* in many Indian languages, originates from East Africa and has probably been grown in India for over 4,000 years. *Ragi* may have been a major component of the diet in certain areas of the ancient Indus Valley civilization. A hardy crop, it is grown in the plains as well in the mountains upto 2,400 meters above sea-level. Highly nutritious and easily stored, it is valued as a food for children and the elderly. In Sanskrit, *ragi* is known as *nrtta-kondaka* or “dancing grain.”



Surprisingly, though millets like ragi are usually cheaper than wheat or rice, they are nutritionally superior.

Finger millet is considered among the most nutritious of cereals. The study, “The Lost Crops of Africa,” published by the United States National Academies, states:

“The world’s attitude towards finger millet must be reversed. Of all major cereals, this crop is one of the most nutritious. Indeed, some varieties appear to have high levels of methionine, an amino acid lacking in the diets of hundreds of millions of the poor who live on starchy foods such as cassava and plantain. Outsiders have long marveled at how people in Uganda and southern Sudan could develop such strapping physiques and work as hard as they do on just one meal a day. Finger millet seems to be the main reason.”¹²

Finger millet’s protein content has high biological value, meaning that it is easily incorporated into the body. Several amino acids

crucial to human health, which are deficient in most other cereals, are found in ragi. Dietary minerals are also found in abundance, especially calcium which is available in concentrations five to thirty times greater than in other cereals. The phosphorus and iron content is also high.

Pearl Millet

Pearl millet (*Pennisetum glaucum*), also known as bajra in Hindi and *kambu* in Tamil, accounts for about 50% of global millet production, with India being the major producer.

Pearl millet has high levels of vitamins B and dietary minerals iron, zinc, potassium, phosphorus, magnesium, copper and manganese.

Pearl millet is gluten-free and is ideal for those with wheat allergies. The grain is nutritionally superior to rice and wheat, and is considered a high-energy cereal with a good balance of amino acids. A study based on research conducted in India showed that a diet based on pulses and pearl millet is somewhat better at promoting human growth than a wheat diet. Studies have also found that when rice is partially or completely replaced by pearl millet, nutritive value increases appreciably.¹³



Pearl millet is considered to be among the most palatable of cereals while also having one of the best nutrition profiles.

Sorghum

Sorghum often refers collectively to a range of grain species of the genus *Sorghum*. *Sorghum bicolor* is the most important food crop of this family of plants and is known in Hindi as *jowar*. It is the fifth most important cereal grown in the world and is the dietary staple of over half a billion people. Sorghum is among the most efficient food



plants, in the sense, it is highly efficient at photosynthesis, matures very quickly for a food plant, and has the highest production of food energy when compared to human and mechanical energy required to grow the crop.

As the aforementioned study, “The Lost Crops of Africa” puts it:

“With all these qualities and potentials, it is small wonder that certain scientists regard sorghum as a crop with a great future. Undoubtedly, as the world moves towards the time when its supplies of food will be insufficient for its supplies of people, this plant will increasingly contribute to the happiness of the human race. This will happen sooner rather than later. Population is projected to almost double within most of our lifetimes. How to feed billions of newcomers on diminishing amounts of prime cropland will likely be the overwhelming global issue of the period just ahead. Obviously, vast amounts of the less fertile and more difficult lands must be forced to produce food. Moreover, if the much feared greenhouse effect warms up the world, sorghum could become the crop of choice over large parts of the areas that are today renowned as breadbaskets, rice lands, or corn belts.”¹⁴



Sesame

Sesame (*Sesamun indicum*), known as *til* in Hindi, *ellu* in Tamil and *nuvvulu* in Telugu is a very popular source of protein in many parts of India, Africa and Asia. Sesame is the oldest known oilseed crop and was first cultivated in India over 5000 years ago, from where it spread to other parts of the globe. It is known to have been cultivated in the Indus Valley and the Mesopotamian civilizations.



The phrase “Open Sesame” which opens the thieves’ cave in “Alibaba and the Forty Thieves” from “One Thousand and One Nights,” possibly has its origin in the way sesame fruit capsules pop to release sesame seeds when ripe.

Sesame seeds have the highest oil content of any oilseed crop and are consumed as laddus, rotis or sprinkled on breads. Sesame seeds can be difficult to digest unless chewed well and are therefore frequently crushed and consumed as a paste or “butter.” Sesame seeds are good energy sources, sources of protein, dietary fiber, minerals and micronutrients. In fact, they were consumed by the soldiers of the ancient Roman army as an energy food. Studies have also shown that consumption of sesame seeds reduces the risk of cancer and heart disease, and can prove very effective in lowering high cholesterol levels.

Sesame oil is also obtained from the seeds and is used in cooking. It has been valued for its nutritional qualities since ancient times. Studies have shown that sesame oil can inhibit human colon cancer, lower blood pressure and stimulate beneficial antioxidants.¹⁵

Sesame causes a lot of heat in the body, which is why it is part of the tradition in South India to eat sesame seeds in winter. The heat that it generates helps deal with the cold. Roasted coconut and roasted sesame together make a high-energy, high-protein package. The oil in sesame seeds also provides the calories needed for people involved in strenuous physical activities like trekking.

In Indian culture, sesame also has a significance that goes beyond its nutritional value. Sadhguru elaborates on this other aspect of sesame.

“Sesame is a phenomenal medium and has an enormous sense of memory. Most people who have grown up in India are aware that sesame is a good receptacle which easily imbibes and retains whatever it comes in touch with. So, you are not supposed to receive sesame from anyone unless they are a trusted source because they could easily charge it with negative energy and give it you. It can also be charged with positive energy and given to you, which is why the prasad given in [Dhyanalinga](#) is made of sesame. Whenever we want to transmit something through physical means, sesame and salt are two things we make use of. So, if you want to “eat” Dhyanalinga, the best thing to eat is either sesame or salt from the Dhyanalinga. The prasad is a ball of sesame seeds mixed with jaggery, and it stays on the linga for at least twenty-four hours.”



– Sadhguru



Participants of the [Isha Hata Yoga Teacher Training Program](#), sitting for their meal.

“At the ashram, when food is served, we don’t eat immediately. We wait for everyone to sit and something to go on everyone’s plate, then we utter an invocation, and then we slowly eat. To immediately grab and eat the food would be very simple but you will become more unconscious. To wait when you are hungry, for those few minutes takes an enormous amount of awareness for a person.” – Sadhguru

Lentils and Nuts

Horse Gram

Horse gram (*Macrotyloma uniflorum*) is a pulse crop native to the south-east Asian subcontinent and tropical Africa. The US National Academy of Sciences has identified this legume as a potential food source for the future.¹⁶ It has been widely cultivated and consumed in India since ancient times. Traditionally, it is supposed to have been fed to racehorses because it is a powerful source of immediate energy and protein.

Horse gram is a good source of dietary iron and calcium and is among the richest vegetarian sources of protein. However, the

calcium and iron are combined into certain chemical compounds, rendering them mostly un-absorbable by the body. Germination of horse gram is a simple method of food processing that breaks down these compounds and increases the availability of iron and calcium, resulting in enhanced nutritive value. Sprouted horse gram is also digested much more easily.

A simple method of germinating horse gram is to tie unsprouted gram in a white cloth. Soak the bundle in a bowl of water for about six to eight hours. Take the bundle out and empty the gram into another cloth. Tie up this new bundle and leave it for about three days. The gram should have sprouted in this time and the germinated seedling will have come out by about half an inch. The sprouted gram can be eaten raw, but must be chewed well.

Horse gram tends to increase the level of heat in the body, which in Ayurveda is termed *ushna*. Ushna can help tide over coughs and colds during cloudy and rainy weather. However, when the sun is up, if eating horse gram heats your body too much, it must be balanced by eating sprouted green gram.

Nuts about groundnuts!

Groundnuts or peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*) are a complete diet. In India, many yogis go on a 100% groundnut diet because it is a complete food by itself. Groundnuts must be soaked for a minimum of six hours in water, which takes away certain aspects called *pitta* in Ayurveda. If they are eaten without first soaking them, they could cause rashes and nausea.



The groundnut isn't actually a nut. It's a legume. In recent times, groundnuts have gone far indeed. Alan Shepard, commander of Apollo 14, took a peanut with him to the moon. Astro-nut!

Sadhguru tells us a beautiful story about groundnuts from the great Indian epic, the Mahabharat.



“Five thousand years ago, the Kurukshetra war, between the Pandavas and the Kauravas, was the mother of all battles. Nobody could remain neutral. You had to be either on the Kaurava side or the Pandava side. All the kings – hundreds of them – aligned themselves on one side or the other.

The king of Udupi however chose to remain neutral. He spoke to Krishna and said, ‘Those who fight battles have to eat. I will be the caterer for this battle.’ Many of the Udupi people are caterers even today. Krishna said, ‘Fine. Somebody has to cook and serve so you do it.’ They say over 500,000 soldiers had gathered for the battle. The battle lasted 18 days, and every day, thousands were dying. So the Udupi king had to cook that much less food, otherwise it would go waste. Somehow the catering had to be managed. If he kept cooking for 500,000 people it wouldn’t work. Or if he cooked for less, soldiers would go hungry.



But the Udupi king managed it very well. The amazing thing was, every day, the food was exactly enough for all the soldiers and no food was wasted. After a few days, people were amazed, ‘How is he managing to cook the exact amount of food!’ No one could know how many people had died on any given day. By the time they could have taken account of these things, the next day morning would have dawned and again it was time to fight. There was no way the caterer could know how many thousands had died each day, but every day he cooked exactly the volume of food necessary for the rest of the armies.

When someone asked him, ‘How do you manage this?’ the Udupi king replied, ‘Every night I go to Krishna’s tent. Krishna likes to eat boiled groundnuts in the night so I peel them and keep them in a bowl. He eats just a few peanuts, and after he is done I count how many he has eaten. If it’s 10 peanuts, I know tomorrow 10,000 people will be dead. So the next day when I cook lunch, I cook for 10,000 people less. Every day I count these peanuts and cook accordingly, and it turns out right.’

Now you know why Krishna is so nonchalant during the whole Kurukshetra war. Life happens on many levels.”

– Sadhguru



Did You Know?

The groundnut plant originated in South America. There is archaeological evidence to show that groundnuts were being consumed in India and China over 5,000 years ago. Some archaeologists see this as evidence that there was trade or contact between Asia and South America long before Columbus sailed there in 1492. ¹⁷

Tea and Coffee

Tea and coffee are nervous stimulants. Nervous stimulants create a sense of energy for a short while, after which the body's energy levels drop. Consuming too much of nervous stimulants destroys stamina in the long run and affects the body's ability to store energy. Consumption of caffeine has also been related to reduced creativity. ¹⁸

"Should you give up tea or coffee? What you give up is your choice. I will never tell you to give up this or that. All I am saying is – don't live here as a slave to anything, whatever it might be. Instead, learn to live consciously. Whether it is coffee, or cigarettes, or God, learn to live consciously with everything. How much of what, only you can be the judge of that. But you must understand that if you abuse stimulants over a period of time, there will be a price. If you think, 'After all, life is short. Instead of being 90, I will go at 70,' it's fine. I'm not against this attitude, nor am I against coffee.

It is not something to be consumed compulsively. You like the taste of it; you drink the largest cup one day and really, thoroughly enjoy it. Once in a while you drink it, it's fine. But if it is something you must do every day, then there is a problem. If your condition is such that if you don't get your morning cup your day is ruined, then you need to do something about it. A stupid cup of coffee should not decide the quality of your life, isn't it?"



– Sadhguru

Try this instead:

Drinking a glass of ash gourd (winter melon) juice in the morning brings an enormous amount of energy and at the same time, keeps the nerves very calm. Daily consumption of ash gourd greatly enhances intellectual capabilities. But asthmatics and people who are susceptible to cold and cough should add some honey or pepper to the juice. This neutralizes the cooling effect of ash gourd to some extent.



Herbal tea is also a good alternative beverage. There are various types available and their taste can be adjusted to resemble tea. Ginger and coriander tea with the right amount of pepper can be quite an invigorating drink in the morning minus the negative effects of nervous stimulants.

Ghee

The consumption of a spoonful of *ghee* (clarified butter) on a daily basis a few minutes before a meal does wonders for the digestive system. If you eat ghee with sugar, it is digested and turns into fat. But ghee without sugar can cleanse, heal and lubricate the alimentary canal. Additionally, the cleansing of the colon will manifest as a certain glow and aliveness in the skin.

Garlic and Onion

Garlic is powerful medicine when used as is necessary. But if garlic is taken in everyday food, it can cause a lot of damage. Onion is also harmful to the body if taken regularly. Even our eyes begin to water when we cut onions!



Keep in Mind

One thing to remember is, don't become a food freak – “I will not eat this, I will not eat that. I have to eat like this, I have to eat like that.” Eating joyously is more important than eating properly. Food has influences on you but it is not the deciding factor. The true joy of eating is that you are conscious of some other life willing to become a part of you, to merge and mingle with your own life and become you. This is the greatest pleasure that a human being knows, that in some way, something that is not him has become willing to become a part of him.

-Sadhguru

Yummy Recipes

Groundnut-Fruit Smoothie

Take a handful of groundnuts (soaked overnight in water).

Put them in the blender.

Add a little water.

Add fruit if you want.

Churn till it becomes like a porridge.

Add more water if you want it like a milkshake.

One large glass of groundnut banana milkshake can easily keep you going for a few hours. It's a good, easy-to-prepare breakfast. You can have it ready in three minutes and finish it off in the next two minutes.



Date Balls

Ingredients	Quantity
Black dates	20
Cashew nuts	10
Almonds	6
Dry coconut	½
Pumpkin seeds	1 tablespoon

Method of preparation

1. Remove the seeds of the black dates. Put dates in an open vessel and mash with your hands.
2. Coarsely crush or chop the cashew nuts and almonds. Add to dates with pumpkin seeds and mix everything well using your hands.
3. Divide into bite sized portions and shape into balls.
4. Grate the coconut and place in a plate.
5. Put the date balls on the coconut and roll each so that they are covered with grated coconut.
6. Serve.



Date balls have a shelf life of 10 days under refrigeration. Nuts like pistachios and walnuts can also be added. Dates are nutritious and also satisfy your sweet-tooth, making them ideal replacements for sweets.

Ragi Dosa

Ingredients	Quantity
Finger millet (ragi) flour	1 cup
Split black gram flour (coarse urad flour)	1 cup

Cumin seeds, optional	1 teaspoon
Salt	to taste
Curry leaves	8-10
Oil	to cook

Method of preparation

1. Put both the flours in a deep vessel and add water slowly, mixing continuously, to make a batter with the consistency like a dosa batter.
2. Allow batter to rest for 2 hours.
3. Add cumin seeds, salt and hand torn curry leaves and make dosas, using oil as required, on a hot dosa *tawa*.

Coarse urad flour can be replaced with idli flour. In case you do not want to use the 2 hours resting period for the batter, add ¼ cup sour yogurt to the batter. Rest for 15-20 minutes and proceed with the cooking.

Ginger Tea

Ingredients

Quantity

Fresh ginger	2 inch piece
Tulsi leaves	25-30
Dried coriander seeds	2 teaspoons (optional)
Lime juice	1 teaspoon
Honey/ palm jaggery	to taste

Method of preparation

1. Pour 4 ½ cups of water in a small pan. Bring to a boil.



2. Meanwhile, crush the ginger along with the tulsi leaves with a pestle. Add both to water with the coriander seeds if using.
3. Boil the tea on low heat for at least 2 to 3 minutes. Strain into cups and add lime juice and honey/palm jaggery to taste.
4. Serve hot.

For More on Food...

- Visit the [Isha Blog's Food Section](#)
- Watch Sadhguru's video on [How To Manage Your Diet](#)

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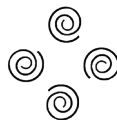
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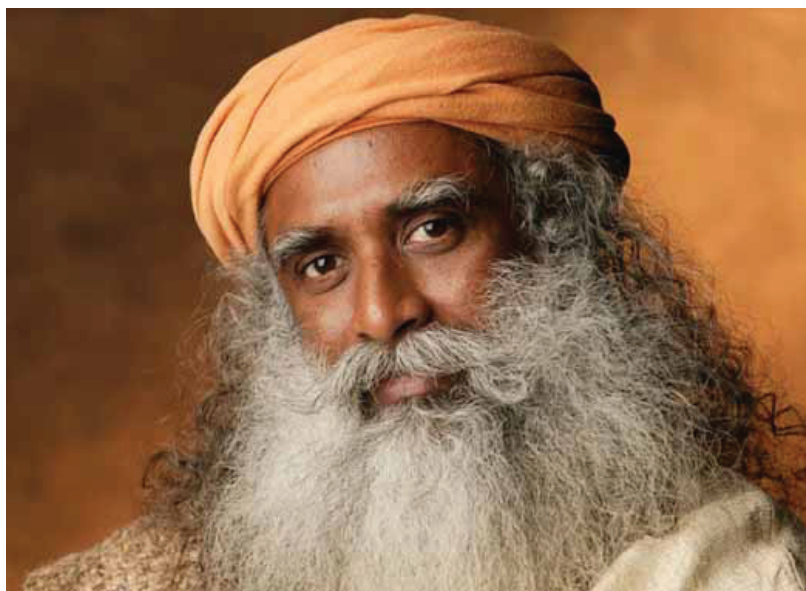
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About Isha

Sadhguru



Yogi, mystic and visionary, Sadhguru is a spiritual master with a difference. An arresting blend of profundity and pragmatism, his life and work serve as a reminder that yoga is not an esoteric discipline from an outdated past, but a contemporary science, vitally relevant to our times. Probing, passionate and provocative, insightful, logical and unfailingly witty, Sadhguru's talks have earned him the reputation of a speaker and opinion-maker of international renown. With a celebratory engagement with life on all levels, Sadhguru's areas of active involvement encompass fields as diverse as architecture and visual design, poetry and painting, ecology and horticulture, music and sports.

Sadhguru is also the founder of Isha Foundation, a non-profit organization which has been dedicated to the wellbeing of the individual and the world for the past three decades. Isha Foundation

does not promote any particular ideology, religion, or race, but transmits inner sciences of universal appeal.

[Sadhguru's Official Website](#)

[Sadhguru's Youtube Channel](#)



[@SadhguruJV](#)



[Sadhguru](#)

Isha Foundation



Isha Foundation is a non-profit human-service organization, supported by over two million volunteers in over 150 centers worldwide. Recognizing the possibility of each person to empower another, Isha Foundation has created a massive movement that is dedicated to address all aspects of human wellbeing, without ascribing to any particular ideology, religion or race.

Isha Foundation is involved in several path-breaking outreach initiatives: Action for Rural Rejuvenation (ARR) enhances the quality of rural life through healthcare and disease prevention, community revitalization, women empowerment, the creation of sustainable livelihoods, and yoga programs. Isha Vidhya empowers rural children with quality education. Project GreenHands (PGH) initiates mass tree planting and creates a culture of care for the environment to keep this planet liveable for future generations.

Isha's unique approach in cultivating human potential has gained worldwide recognition and reflects in Isha Foundation's

special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations.

The Foundation is headquartered at the Isha Yoga Center, set in the lush rainforest at the base of the Velliangiri Mountains in southern India, and at the Isha Institute of Inner-sciences on the spectacular Cumberland Plateau in central Tennessee, USA.

[The Isha Foundation Homepage](#)

[The Isha Blog](#)



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Isha Yoga



Isha Yoga is a customized system of yoga which distills powerful, ancient yogic methods for a modern person, creating peak physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. This basis of total wellbeing accelerates inner growth, allowing each individual to tap the wealth of vibrant life within oneself. Sadhguru's introductory program, Inner Engineering, introduces Shambhavi Mahamudra a simple but powerful kriya (inner energy process) for deep inner transformation.

The uniqueness of Isha Yoga is that it is offered as a science. It draws on the ancient yogic principle that the body is the temple of the spirit and that good health is fundamental to personal and spiritual development. Scientifically structured, it promotes beneficial changes

in one's inner chemistry to accelerate the release of physical, mental and emotional blocks and produce a life-transforming impact of profound experience, clarity and boundless energy.

[The Isha Yoga Homepage](#)

Isha Ruchi



Our bodies are an important factor in how we experience our lives. If kept healthy and well, it can be a stepping stone to a complete and fulfilling life. As Sadhguru says, “What kind of food you eat not only decides the physical aspect of your body, it also decides the very way you think and feel.”

India's ancient culture included a comprehensive system of diet, and food preparation, which ensured that food was a means to physical and spiritual wellbeing. This science (or perhaps “art” would be a more suitable word, since as any traditional Indian housewife would tell you, cooking is actually an intricate art-form) was drawn from the wisdom and insight of yogis and sages, and their complete understanding of the human system. Translating this science into a way of living, these masters infused this knowledge into the fabric of our culture.

However, today, the modern preference for readymade foods has compromised this wisdom. Diverse, traditional grains, spices and condiments, once an integral part of the Indian cuisine, have been replaced with super-refined foods, stripped of their natural goodness

and nutrition.

Isha Ruchi is reviving this ancient knowing, by making healthy foods easily accessible for the twenty-first century city-dweller. Isha Ruchi products are a wholesome collection of snacks, drinks, tiffin mixes and pickles that provide an enticing blend of taste, nutrition and convenience. Made from fresh, high-quality ingredients, Isha Ruchi products are nourishing as well as tasty.

Some of the Isha Ruchi products are:

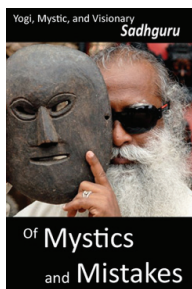
- Kanjis, or porridges, including Sanjeevani, the “life-nourisher,” rich with thirteen different cereals – easy to digest and ideal for the whole family
- Energy Packs: An assortment of energy-giving laddus, or ball-shaped sweets, made of gram flour, groundnuts, sesame, dates, raisins and nuts
- A variety of Dosa mixes, including adai, cholam or jowar, ragi, and kambu or bajra
- Kuzhambu mixes, including Tamil Nadu specialties vathal kuzhambu and vendhaya kuzhambu
- Rice-podi (powder) mixes, including puliyodharai (tamarind), coriander, mint leaves and curry leaves
- Pickles, including citron, lemon, green pepper and mango, carrying exotic and savory flavors to brighten any meal

[The Isha Ruchi Homepage](#)

[Order Isha Ruchi items online](#)

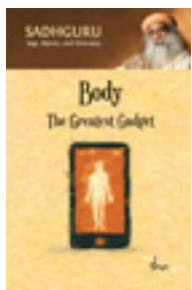
Other Books From Isha Foundation

Of Mystics and Mistakes



“There are only two types of people: Mystics and mistakes,” says Sadhguru. That sounds damning, but mistakes can thankfully be rectified, and that’s the hope this book holds out to seekers. It reminds us that each one of us can make the journey – from confusion to clarity, from error to enlightenment, from self-deception to self-discovery – if only we choose.

Body: The Greatest Gadget



Body: The Greatest Gadget is an introduction to the most sophisticated gadget on the planet. It is a first step on an intriguing and exciting journey that culminates in total mastery of the system, allowing us to stay rooted in the physical, and yet taste the beyond. Above all, the book is a glimpse of a possibility to live and function in a way that most human beings would consider superhuman.

Forest Flower



Forest Flower is Isha’s monthly publication, full of inspiring expressions by Sadhguru, the latest news in and around Isha, shared experiences by Isha meditators and much more. Forest Flower is not just something to be read and enjoyed – it also helps you stay connected to Sadhguru and Isha and includes Sadhguru’s poems and articles, delicious recipes, and the latest news from Isha.

All Isha books are available for digital download at ishadownloads.com. Paperbacks can also be ordered online at ishashoppe.com, or purchased at all major bookstores.